

Kennedy Farm (John Brown Farm)
Chestnut Grove Road
Samples Manor Vicinity
Washington County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-227

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MD,
22-SAMAN.V,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THE KENNEDY FARM

HABS No. MD-227

Location: Chestnut Grove Road, near Antietam and Harper's Ferry Road, 0.6 miles northwest of Samples Manor, Washington County, Maryland.

Present Owner Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the World.

Significance: The building was used by John Brown as a rendezvous during the summer preceding the raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: Not known.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The original owners of the Kennedy Farm are not known. Isabel A. Brien (through her trustees Jonathan Meredith and John Spear Nichols) sold the property to Dr. Robert Kennedy in December of 1852. Dr. Kennedy died in 1857 and the farm was rented by his executors to John Brown. The building passed through a succession of owners to J. Finley Wilson and W.C. Huston, who sold it to the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World.
4. Builder: Not known.
5. Original Plans and Construction: No original plans or drawings have been located.
6. Additions and Alterations: The oldest part of the building appears to be of stone and log construction partially veneered with brick. Immediately adjoining it is a stone building dating from the John Brown raid. There are wood frame additions of obviously later date.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions: The two and one-half story house measures 38'4" x 17'3" and has a modern one story wing. The main block has a basement and is rectangular in plan.

2. Wall construction: The foundation walls of stone extend to the second floor level and are painted on the exterior by several washes of lime mixture. Because of these washes it is difficult to determine the masonry pattern or the technique of notching in the log portion of the structure. The stone walls at the first floor level vary in thickness from 2'10" to 1'8", and at the second floor level they vary from 10" to 1'8". The stone and log construction is brick veneered on the south and east elevations.

Small frame appendages have been added to the north and west elevations and appear to be used for storage and a kitchen. The two story wooden porch and exterior stairs are a distinguishing feature of the building and appear in the early photographs.

5. Porches: There is a two story front porch on the southeast facade, accessible by a stair.
6. Chimneys: There is a small stone chimney.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There is a first floor entrance doorway with a simple wooden lintel. Its door (not original) has four panels. There is also a west doorway in the wing with plain trim and a plain two paneled door. A doorway in the south room leads to the front porch.
 - b. Windows: There are thirteen six-light over six-light sash windows. The east attic window is three-lights over four-lights. There are three small six-paned windows on the west side of the wing; the north and east sides of the wing have two small two-paned windows. All of the windows have plain trim.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The roof is gabled and covered with sheet metal.

B. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor Plans:
 - a. Basement: The basement walls and floor are of clay. It is accessible through a stair with a hatch located on the southeast (front) side of the house.
 - b. First Floor: The first floor is divided into two major rooms with three small rooms in the wing.

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c. Second Floor: There are three rooms in the second floor with windows or doors opening to the porch.

2. Stairways: There is a corner stairway on the rear side of the house with twenty one risers leading from the first floor to the attic.
3. Flooring: Most of the floor boards vary in width from 4" to 12". Much of the original flooring has been replaced.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The basement walls are clay. Two rooms in the main block are plastered. The walls of the second floor are plastered. The west room of the attic has plaster walls and a beaded board ceiling. The east room of the attic has exposed log walls and ceiling. The three small rooms in the wing have different wall finishes: wood, wallboard and concrete.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: On the first floor there is an opening connecting the two rooms; it has plain trim and no door. There are doorways in the wing which have plain board and batten doors.

On the second floor all three rooms have connecting doorways with similar doors.

The attic doorway is similar to that on the first floor, except that it has a board and batten door.
 - b. Windows: All of the windows have plain trim.
6. Heating: There are no fireplaces for either cooking or heating. The small flues may indicate that they served some sort of small stove. There is no indication of the original lighting system.

D. Site:

1. General Setting: The Kennedy Farm house faces southeast on gently sloping farmlands on Chestnut Grove Road, near Antietum and Harper's Ferry.

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